

ST MARY'S COMMUNITY LTD

Guidelines for Homilies		
Guideline number: 1.0	Version number: 1	Date proposed:
Authorised by: Community Faith Council		
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Context and Purpose

The Liturgy at St Mary's in Exile has two parts - the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Homily is an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word.

The Liturgy of the Word is comprised of the First Reading; a Psalm; a Second Reading; a Gospel Acclamation; the Gospel; the Homily and the Prayers of the Faithful.

The Homily is that part of the Liturgy of the Word where the Homilist assists members of the community to reflect on their lives "in light of the Christian mystery". It may involve one or more of the following:

- sharing a life experience;
- explaining a new or increased understanding of life or the world;
- presenting historical, environmental or cultural perspectives;
- promoting discussion/reflection on scripture, theology, liturgy, spirituality or community;
- encouraging support and advocacy for social justice

or providing reflection/ personal insights on living lives in light of the Gospel.

A good Homily will be an inspiration for the members of the community at the deepest level of the human heart and will address the real questions of the human experience. It will enhance their understanding and inspire them to live out the words of the prophet Micah "to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with our God".

Choosing Readings

The Homilist can choose the readings for the Liturgy themselves or seek assistance from members of the Liturgy Committee.

The First and Second Readings can be Christian/Hebrew Scripture or quotes from authors or poets that give focus to the message of the homily.

The Gospel can be the set Gospel for the day or another Gospel reading that can more readily enlighten the message of the homily. If at all possible, the Homilist should link the Homily to the Gospel.

Members of the Liturgy Committee will choose the Psalm and the Gospel Acclamation and will endeavour to select hymns that support the message of the homily.

The Homilist may wish to offer recommendations to the Liturgy Committee for the short Opening Prayer and the Blessing so that these further reflect the spirit and message of the homily.

Organisation

The following need to be provided to the Liturgy organiser (Terry) at least **5 days** before the Homily is delivered:

- A brief outline of the Homily (or script of Homily) to enable Liturgy Committee to select appropriate hymns/songs/prayers;
- A quote from the Homily or a one sentence explanation of the Homily for the Parish Bulletin and the EBulletin;
- A photo for the E-Bulletin. (If uncomfortable with a photo, a small visual)
- Any recommendations for First and Second readings, Gospel Reading, Opening Prayer or Blessing.

If any visuals or music are to be used, arrangements need to be made with the liturgy organiser (Peter or Terry) 2-3 days prior.

Homilists need to be aware that a Script of the Homily is required for the website and that the Homily may be taped and placed on social media. If there are any difficulties with this, contact the liturgy organiser.

Delivery of Homily

Homilists are asked to be at the venue at least 15 mins prior to the Liturgy and to make their presence known to the Liturgy Organiser.

The Homilist moves to the Lectern during the Gospel Acclamation; announces the Gospel reading; reads the Gospel; concludes with the words “This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ”; asks participants to be seated and commences the Homily. The recommended length of the Homily is 10-15 mins.

It is important that the Homilist speaks directly into the microphone, delivers the Homily with energy and maintains some eye contact with those gathered who are seated at three sides of the room.

If the Homily is reflective, conclude by asking those gathered to reflect for a few moments. Remain standing at the lectern during this time for reflection.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity is an integral part of the St Mary's in Exile community and this needs to be reflected in the Homily. It is important that all language, including scripture readings be gender inclusive; all people spoken of respectfully and that there is a recognition that the wisdom and mystery of God is beyond the understanding of one person or one religion.

The St Mary's in Exile community welcomes all those who wish "to share in our faith journey" so the Homilist needs to be cognitive of people of different ethnic backgrounds, faith traditions, personal beliefs, political persuasion and understandings of religious concepts and language. The aim is to foster an inclusive spirituality that helps all people find deep meaning in their lives.